

REMARKS

This application has been reviewed in light of the Office Action dated December 6, 2005. Claims 1, 3, 5-13, and 18-21 are pending in this application, of which Claims 1, 5, and 18-21 are in independent form. Claims 2, 4, and 14-17 have been cancelled, without prejudice or disclaimer of the subject matter presented therein. Claims 1, 5, 11, 12, and 18-21 have been amended to define more clearly what Applicants regard as their invention. Favorable reconsideration is requested.

Applicants note with appreciation the allowance of Claims 5-13, 19, and 21, and the indication that Claim 2 would be allowable if rewritten to overcome the rejection under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, set forth below, and if rewritten so as not to depend from a rejected claim and with no change in scope.

Claims 1-4, 18, and 20 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite. Claims 1, 18 and 20 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 4,764,885 (*Greanias et al.*). Claims 3 and 4 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over *Greanias et al.*. Claims 14-17 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a), as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,700,129 (*Usuda et al.*).

First, cancellation of Claims 2, 4, and 14-17 renders their rejections moot.

Claims 1, 3, 4, 18, and 20 have been carefully reviewed and amended as deemed necessary to ensure that they conform fully to the requirements of Section 112, second paragraph, with special attention to the points raised in section 2 of the Office Action. It is believed that the rejection under Section 112, second paragraph, has been obviated, and its withdrawal is therefore respectfully requested.

It is noted that the allowable subject matter of Claim 2 has been incorporated into Claim 1, thereby rendering the rejection of Claim 1 under Section 102(b) moot. Further, Claim 1 has been amended to overcome the Section 112, second paragraph rejection. Therefore, Claim 1 is believed to be in condition for allowance.

Independent Claims 18 and 20 have also been amended to incorporate the allowable subject matter of Claim 2, thereby rendering the rejection of Claims 18 and 20 under Section 102(b) moot. Further, Claims 18 and 20 have been amended to overcome the Section 112, second paragraph rejection. Therefore, Claims 18 and 20 are believed to be in condition for allowance as well.

The other claims in this application depend from one or another of the independent claims discussed above and, therefore, are submitted to be patentable for at least the same reasons.

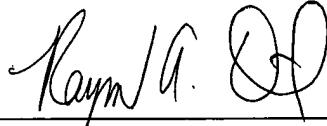
In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicants respectfully request favorable reconsideration and early passage to issue of the present application.

No petition to extend the time for response to the Office Action is deemed necessary for the this Amendment. If, however, such a petition is required to make this Amendment timely filed, then this paper should be considered such a petition and the Commissioner is authorized to charge the requisite petition fee to Deposit Account 06-1205.

CONCLUSION

Applicants' undersigned attorney may be reached in our New York Office by telephone at (212) 218-2100. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our address listed below.

Respectfully submitted,



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